A portraitist’s golden brush

Dot scenes pay off for Project DEEP

By Daniel Sheehan
Arts & Features Editor

This year, for the 26th year in a row, Neponset-based artist Celia McDonough has spent much of her free time toiling over the 13 watercolor portraits that will grace Project DEEP’s 2021 ‘Celebrate Dorchester’ calendar. The annual artworks have become collector’s items in the neighborhood since McDonough began the tradition as a fundraiser for Project DEEP (Dorchester Educational Enrichment Program), a tutoring and test prep non-profit started by her son Brendan in 1995.

The 78-year-old McDonough didn’t begin painting until her 30s, when she began taking workshops and enrolling in night classes at the Mass College of Art and Design. “I only paint watercolor, and that’s pretty much the only kind I’ve done for the last 40 years,” she said in a recent interview. “That’s what I enjoy.”

Her works capture the natural beauty and rich history of Dorchester, often evoking bygone eras or timeless land-scape views. Certain go-to “fallbacks” include Dorchester Bay, the Walter Baker Chocolate Factory (you can do it from every angle and come up with something different, she noted), the Neponset River, and still-lifes of Dorchester pottery.

This year’s calendar includes past scenes of Meet-the-Artist events, workshops and enrolling in night classes at the Mass College of Art and Design. “I only paint watercolor, and that’s pretty much the only kind I’ve done for the last 40 years,” she said in a recent interview. “That’s what I enjoy.”

Her works capture the natural beauty and rich history of Dorchester, often evoking bygone eras or timeless landscapes as a part of what you have heard us call the Future Decker Series. The series features discussions with residents, architects, and designers as they share their work and learn from one another about the past, present, and future of the iconic building type that’s prevalent in Dorchester and other Boston neighborhoods: the three-decker.

Speakers touched on the architectural, economic, and, ultimately, social value of retrofitting three-deckers to be sustainable as part of the city’s carbon neutrality goals. Kat Eschel, the city’s Carbon Neutrality Program manager, pointed to Mayor Martin Walsh’s commitment in 2017 to reach carbon neutrality by 2050, and added that the city has been able to cut its emissions by 20 percent since 2005.

But that means that we’re not moving fast enough. We’re kind of on track to meet that blue line but we are way above that red line,” said Eschel, referring to a chart of the city’s carbon emissions displayed below. “The red line is what we need to be at if we want to get to carbon neutrality by 2050,” she said.

She noted that the city has undertaken a retrofitting three-deckers to be sustainable as part of the city’s carbon neutrality goals. Eschel, the city’s Carbon Neutrality Program manager, pointed to Mayor Martin Walsh’s commitment in 2017 to reach carbon neutrality by 2050, and added that the city has been able to cut its emissions by 20 percent since 2005.

Question: What is the value in upgrading three-deckers to fit in a carbon-neutral community?

‘Future Decker’ series hopes to find the answer

By Katie Trojano
Reporter Staff

The Boston Society of Architects held a virtual conversation about making sustainable homes and energy retrofits for small- to middle-scale housing last week as a part of its upcoming exhibition, the Future Decker Series.

The series features discussions with residents, architects, and designers as they share their work and learn from one another about the past, present, and future of the iconic building type that’s prevalent in Dorchester and other Boston neighborhoods: the three-decker.

Speakers touched on the architectural, economic, and, ultimately, social value of retrofitting three-deckers to be sustainable as part of the city’s carbon neutrality goals. Kat Eschel, the city’s Carbon Neutrality Program manager, pointed to Mayor Martin Walsh’s commitment in 2017 to reach carbon neutrality by 2050, and added that the city has been able to cut its emissions by 20 percent since 2005.

But that means that we’re not moving fast enough. We’re kind of on track to meet that blue line but we are way above that red line,” said Eschel, referring to a chart of the city’s carbon emissions displayed below. “The red line is what we need to be at if we want to get to carbon neutrality by 2050,” she said.

She noted that the city has undertaken a retrofitting three-deckers to be sustainable as part of the city’s carbon neutrality goals. Eschel, the city’s Carbon Neutrality Program manager, pointed to Mayor Martin Walsh’s commitment in 2017 to reach carbon neutrality by 2050, and added that the city has been able to cut its emissions by 20 percent since 2005.

“Through the Future Decker Series, we aim to engage all stakeholders in conversations about the three-decker’s role in a carbon-neutral community,” Eschel said. “We believe that a job to afford a home to rent or own and that creates jobs and supports local businesses is a way to address the economic, social and environmental challenges we face today.”

The series will continue throughout the year with discussions on topics such as materials and methods, financing, and incentives for homeowners. The next session will take place on April 8 at 6 p.m. and will focus on the role of three-deckers in the city’s housing policy goals.

Affordability, jobs focus of latest huddle on plan for Bay City development

By Katie Trojano
Reporter Staff

Some 200 people logged on to a virtual meeting last Wed., Dec. 2 as the principals from Accordia Partners LLC, delved into economic impacts and housing affordability specifics for their massive Dorchester Bay City development along the Columbia Point waterfront and later engaged in a question-and-answer segment with those who took part in the session.

This was the last in a five-part public engagement series, hosted by the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA), that was set up to review elements of Accordia’s plans to transform the 34-acre site into a new community with a mix of housing, retail, and public space.

“We believe that a job to afford a home to rent or own and that creates jobs and supports local businesses is a way to address the economic, social and environmental challenges we face today.”

The series will continue throughout the year with discussions on topics such as materials and methods, financing, and incentives for homeowners. The next session will take place on April 8 at 6 p.m. and will focus on the role of three-deckers in the city’s housing policy goals.

Affordability, jobs focus of latest huddle on plan for Bay City development

By Katie Trojano
Reporter Staff

Some 200 people logged on to a virtual meeting last Wed., Dec. 2 as the principals from Accordia Partners LLC, delved into economic impacts and housing affordability specifics for their massive Dorchester Bay City development along the Columbia Point waterfront and later engaged in a question-and-answer segment with those who took part in the session.

This was the last in a five-part public engagement series, hosted by the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA), that was set up to review elements of Accordia’s plans to transform the 34-acre site into a new community with a mix of housing, retail, and public space.

“We believe that a job to afford a home to rent or own and that creates jobs and supports local businesses is a way to address the economic, social and environmental challenges we face today.”

The series will continue throughout the year with discussions on topics such as materials and methods, financing, and incentives for homeowners. The next session will take place on April 8 at 6 p.m. and will focus on the role of three-deckers in the city’s housing policy goals.
**Police, Courts & Fire**

Boston Police arrested a man they say repeatedly shot a woman in the area of Adams Street and Victory Road near Dorchester on Saturday morning. Jean Basulto, 31, of East Boston, was arrested on Saturday night faces a litany of charges including armed robbery and assaulting a police officer — stemming from two incidents near in Fields Corner. Police say officers reencountered the suspect near a pathway leading down the hill toward Adams Street.

Repeated gunshots lead to an arrest of an E. Boston man with fresh scraps and controversies - and two other men with cut hands on their police. Says the two men with cut hands had launched a physical attack after an argument during a drug deal.

Auditorium—

Repeated gunshots lead to an arrest of an E. Boston man with fresh scraps and controversies - and two other men with cut hands on their police. Says the two men with cut hands had launched a physical attack after an argument during a drug deal.

**UPCOMING CIVIC MEETINGS AND COMMUNITY EVENTS**

**“Vision for Edward Everett Square, Inc.”** a group dedicated to restoring and beautifying the square at the intersection of Columbus Road and Mass Ave., will hold a virtual organizing meeting, on Thursdays, Dec. 10 at 7:30 p.m. to change its name to “Edward Everett Square Improvement Association. The board is looking for new members and leaders to work on the project. Those interested in serving as an officer or board member or obtaining the link to the Zoom meeting should contact John McColgan at john.mccolgan@verizon.net.

McGormack Civic meets virtually on Dec. 15 – The Polish Triangle’s John W. McGormack Civic meets will meet virtually via Zoom on Tues., Dec. 15 at 7 p.m. Go to McGormackCivic.org for more info.

**Viet Family Stories, Chuyen Gia Dinh 2.0** – Featuring local artists exploring themes of diaspora, resilience, memories, mental health, and healing practices in Vietnamese families — will be livestreamed on Sat., Dec. 12, from noon to 2 p.m. on Facebook and YouTube. Watch the translation, 1080p, with closed captioning in English and Vietnamese. RSVP for the virtual event and learn more information at tranvuarts.com/vietfamstories.
By Chris Lisinski  
STATE HOUSE  
AND SERVICE

On the doorstep of reaching the state’s highest court, Boston Municipal Court Judge Serge Georges Jr. acknowledged the impact of systemic racism on criminal justice and defended his peers who “try to get it right every day.” The latest Gov. Baker nominees for the Supreme Judicial Court, Georges said at his confirmation hearing on Dec. 2 that he could not dismiss the likelihood that “taints that plague society” would be present in the court.

Asked by Governor’s Councillor Robert-Jubinville how any defendant could get a “fair shake” given racial disparities in Massachusetts criminal justice data, Georges rattled off the names of fellow Haitian immigrants and argued that there was “no statistical difference” in the state’s data for people with the same surnames as the son of Haitian immigrants, said about the effects of racism. “But I do think there are a lot of good people trying to do the right thing every day, and that might not be popular to say, but it needs to be said.”

The Governor’s Councill, which vets and approves judicial nominees, plans to vote on Georges’ nomination on Dec. 9, but he already appears to be a lock for a seat on the top court, with most observers predicting him as they questioned him during last Wednesday’s hearing before Supreme Judicial Court’s Justice Kimberly Budd, who called the nomination a “home run.” Councillor Joseph Wendlandt, who owns a specialty court sessions, which Georges has served as firm justice data, Georges said the “majority of the court that bears on the constitutionally protected rights of lawful gun owners and public safety” can mutually co-exist, “but on topics such as the possible tension between a conservative US Supreme Court and abortion or voting rights, Georges cautioned that he did not want to violate judicial ethics by answering. “My view is we would continue to do what we’ve always done, and if a matter comes before the court that bears on fundamental constitutional or the construction of statutory rights, the SJC as it winds its way up will do what they always do: Consider the arguments and make the best decisions that they can,” he said.

The court is poised to become more diverse following the recent wave of nominations from Baker and Lt. Gov. Karyn Polito, including Budd, three of the seven members will be people of color, while Budd, Wendlandt, and Elspeth Cypher will ensure that of the three justices are women.

Asked how meaningful it was the son of Haitian immigrants to be nominated, Georges replied, “I can’t say that it means everything, but I can tell you that it’s pretty close.”

A range of speakers backed Georges at his hearing, including Appeals Court Chief Justice Mark Green, who jokingly lamented that he had hoped to welcome the judge into his circuit. “He’s a very special person, and I’m confident he will be a very strong addition to an already strong bench on the Supreme Judicial Court,” Green said.

Former US Sen. Mo Cowan, who described himself as a “longtime friend” of Georges, said the judge has proven through both his professional work and his personal relationships to be “a servant leader committed to fairness, justice and honor. “Whether from the bench, in the classroom, or at a graduates’ barbecue smoker — which produces delights worthy of the name — George over is dispensing wisdom, harsh truth, and encouragement designed to help us all be the best versions of ourselves,” Cowan said. “If this sounds similar, it is because Judge Georges judges himself similarly in the courtroom, understanding that we are all work in progress.”

Serge Georges, Jr. Spent years as a practicing attorney before becoming a judge at Dorchester District Court.

Zoning Board OK’s plan to reopen Venice Pizza

The Zoning Board of Appeal on Tuesday approved plans to reopen Venice Pizza at the corner of Savin Hill Avenue and Dorchester Avenue. The pizzeria closed in early 2019 after 10 years in business. Jason Weisman, who owns the building, wants to bring back a neighborhood-friendly eatery, his lawyer, Thomas Miller, told the board at a hearing. “We’re making almost no changes,” except to upgrade the kitchen and make the restaurant handicapped accessible, Miller said. He did not specify a date for the reopening.

REPORTER STAFF

Sam Doran/SHNS photo

EAST BOSTON SAVINGS BANK

Home of Respectful Banking™

800.657.3272 EBSB.com

NMLS # 457291

Everywhere you need.
AND YOU’LL RECEIVE FREE:

OPEN ANY NEW CHECKING ACCOUNT AND YOU’LL RECEIVE FREE:

• Instant issue ATM/Visa® check card with access to AllPoint® ATM network
• Online Banking, Bill Pay and e-Statements
• Mobile Banking, Pay and Mobile Check Deposit
• Plus, get your FREE GIFT when you open any new checking account!

Simply Free Checking  ·  Interest Checking  ·  Premier Checking

Sam Doran/SHNS photo

Serge Georges, Jr.: Spent years as a practicing attorney before becoming a judge at Dorchester District Court.

The Zoning Board of Appeal on Tuesday approved plans to reopen Venice Pizza at the corner of Savin Hill Avenue and Dorchester Avenue. The pizzeria closed in early 2019 after 10 years in business. Jason Weisman, who owns the building, wants to bring back a neighborhood-friendly eatery, his lawyer, Thomas Miller, told the board at a hearing. “We’re making almost no changes,” except to upgrade the kitchen and make the restaurant handicapped accessible, Miller said. He did not specify a date for the reopening.

REPORTER STAFF

Sam Doran/SHNS photo

Serge Georges, Jr.: Spent years as a practicing attorney before becoming a judge at Dorchester District Court.

Zoning Board OK’s plan to reopen Venice Pizza

The Zoning Board of Appeal on Tuesday approved plans to reopen Venice Pizza at the corner of Savin Hill Avenue and Dorchester Avenue. The pizzeria closed in early 2019 after 10 years in business. Jason Weisman, who owns the building, wants to bring back a neighborhood-friendly eatery, his lawyer, Thomas Miller, told the board at a hearing. “We’re making almost no changes,” except to upgrade the kitchen and make the restaurant handicapped accessible, Miller said. He did not specify a date for the reopening.
Baker resets public restrictions, citing risks of virus surge

(Continued from page 1)

simply wait for the vaccine to get here.”

In Boston, city officials are tracking a significant uptick in transmissions and hospitalizations in the past few days, mirroring an alarming trend in the state that Mayor Walsh warned could be worse than last spring’s peak in the crisis. Last Thursday, he said that city officials were increasingly concerned about mounting cases and hospitalizations.

“The feeling that I’m getting here is that these numbers could overtake what we saw in April and May,” the mayor told reporters outside Boston City Hall. “Most of these cases where people are getting sick, they went traveling for the holidays and didn’t realize they had the virus. By Tuesday, we could be building a field hospital, or we could be talking about numbers getting better in this region. This virus is still deadly.”

Dorchester, East Boston, and Hyde Park remained the neighborhoods with the highest positivity rate, Walsh said. Data published on the Boston Public Health Commission’s website for the week ending on Nov. 26 show the following positivity rates for Dorchester and Mattapan: Dorchester 02121/02125 at 15.8 percent; 02122/02124 at 14.9 percent; and Mattapan: Dorchester 02124 at 11.4 percent.

The mayor advised Bostonians over the age of 65, or those experiencing health issues or breathing issues, over 65; if you have health issues or breathing issues, you shouldn’t put yourself in those situations, either. It’s a personal call right now – to make it easier for him to roll back reopening guidelines as the pandemic worsens.

Walsh urged anyone who traveled for Thanksgiving or attended group gatherings to be tested again. “The biggest part of my concern is coming from the number of hospitalizations going up,” he added. As he announced a tightening of some business restrictions on Tuesday, Baker suggested that the looming expiration of federal unemployment assistance programs had weighed on his decisions. He was asked at a State House press conference whether the passage of additional federal stimulus for states would make it easier for him to roll back reopening guidelines as the pandemic worsens.

“I’ve been urging my colleagues in Washington for quite a while now to recognize and understand how important it would be for all of their constituents to come together on a plan that either looks like, or is an extension of, the CARES Act of last summer, last spring,” Baker responded.

He mentioned the expiration at the end of the month of enhanced federal unemployment assistance payments, including the termination of the Pandemic Unemployment Assistance (PUA) program created by Congress as a life raft in the spring for gig workers and other independent contractors and artists who couldn’t work but were ineligible for traditional unemployment benefits.

“Unless that thing gets extended, there will not be an unemployment assistance program in the United States for a whole bunch of folks who, through no fault of their own, are not able to work,” the governor said.

Since April, 285,942 eligible claims have been submitted in Massachusetts for PUA benefits and another 1,149,691 EABRSR Act that was passed for traditional benefits. The state’s unemployment rate in October sat at 7.4 percent, and the Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that Massachusetts had lost 340,200 jobs since March 2020.

“These are really important issues when you’re thinking and talking about what you’re going to do with respect to people’s access to work,” Baker said, who joined four other Republican governors on Monday to call on Congress to get a deal for additional coronavirus relief done before the holiday recess.

As the announcement on Tuesday that maximum capacity levels would lowered on Sunday from 50 percent to 40 percent for houses of worship, offices, libraries and businesses including retail shops, health clubs, museums, arcades, golf facilities and movie theaters, the archdiocese of Boston said that afternoon that many of its churches are already limiting their capacity at 40 percent or lower.

“We believe people understand that this is a fluid situation and that it requires all of us to be vigilant in our behavior following the best advice of medical and science experts,” Terrence Donilon, spokesman for the archdiocese, said. “This is our way to help keep our family, friends, and fellow parishioners safe, including ourselves. We can continue to participate in our Catholic faith and be safe at the same time.”

Donilon added that the archdiocese’s pandemic response team is reviewing the governor’s latest announcement and will communicate directly to churches, schools, and parishes including guidance from church leaders in required. Though in-person Mass rescheduled earlier this year, the church has indefinitely suspended the obligation for Catholics to attend Mass on Sunday.

Katie Traugh of the Reporter contributed to this story.
Amid mounting pressure, MBTA re-thinks service cuts

By Katie Trojano  REPORTER STAFF

Mayor Walsh this week urged the MBTA to rethink its current plan to eliminate or scale back bus routes, ferries, and other services in an effort to offset a deepening budget shortfall caused by the pandemic. And Walsh’s critique—along with push-back from other elected officials and the public—seems to be having some effect.

Speaking on Monday outside of the MBTA’s Government Center Station alongside other elected officials and union leaders, Walsh urged the T’s Fiscal Management and Control Board (FMCB) and legislators to come up with a new plan to cope with a $879 million budget deficit. The board, which was set to meet on Monday, pushed back a vote on the service cuts package a week, to next Monday, Dec. 14.

Walsh was pointed in his remarks: “I’m asking and demanding that the FMCB go back, sit down with the legislature and come back with an equitable plan. Cutting MBTA service will only set us back further in the commonwealth,” he said.

The same day, MBTA General Manager Steve Poftak, described a “dynamic and rapidly evolving situation” and said he would suggest deferring some critical decisions on the service cuts until February, when the agency will formally develop “an equitable plan. Cutting MBTA service will only set us back further in the commonwealth,” he said.

The future of T service remains up in the air for this passenger and many like him. Proposed MBTA cuts include less frequent subway and commuter trains. More than 1,000 commuters who use them.

The study, released by the Machinist Union District 15 and the Public Transit Public Good Coalition, cited a new report projecting that more than 800 jobs could be eliminated if the MBTA moves ahead with major service cuts.

“All of the MBTA’s core subway lines would run 20 percent less frequently. The Green Line’s E Branch would stop running trolleys at the Brigham Circle stop in the Mission Hill neighborhood, replacing the final five stops with bus service for the fewer than 1,000 commuters who use them,” said Vartabedian.

The proposed cuts, Walsh argued, would hurt essential workers that “keep the city running” and cannot opt to work from home, as well as residents with disabilities, and veterans who use the line to access services at the VA Hospital.

“Walsh was pointed in his remarks: “I’m asking and demanding that the FMCB go back, sit down with the legislature and come back with an equitable plan. Cutting MBTA service will only set us back further in the commonwealth,” he said.

The future of T service remains up in the air for this passenger and many like him. Proposed MBTA cuts include less frequent subway and commuter trains.

The future of T service remains up in the air for this passenger and many like him. Proposed MBTA cuts include less frequent subway and commuter trains. More than 1,000 commuters who use them.

The study, released by the Machinist Union District 15 and the Public Transit Public Good Coalition, cited a new report projecting that more than 800 jobs could be eliminated if the MBTA moves ahead with major service cuts.

“All of the MBTA’s core subway lines would run 20 percent less frequently. The Green Line’s E Branch would stop running trolleys at the Brigham Circle stop in the Mission Hill neighborhood, replacing the final five stops with bus service for the fewer than 1,000 commuters who use them,” said Vartabedian.

The proposed cuts, Walsh argued, would hurt essential workers that “keep the city running” and cannot opt to work from home, as well as residents with disabilities, and veterans who use the line to access services at the VA Hospital.

“The largest groups of drivers and operators live in Dorchester where the health and economic toll of the pandemic has been among one of the most in the state—we cannot stand for this,” he added.

“The T is still running pre-pandemic levels of service, but only transporting slightly more than a quarter as many customers—and therefore collecting far less fare revenue than before COVID hit.

On Monday, Gov. Baker had this to say when asked about the MBTA at a press conference: “I think running empty trains and buses, as a general rule, is bad public policy. “And I also think the decision to say that we just can’t run empty trains and empty buses over and over again is a particularly inappropriate response,” Baker added.

What’s next

The plan was laid out last month—created by an inter-agency task force of elected officials, the MBTA, and other key city and state stakeholders, and subject to change without notice. Offer valid through 01/01/2021. Membership requires a $25 deposit in a share/savings account.

Apply online at memberspluscu.org and you could be approved — INSTANTLY!

To all of our friends and neighbors, we wish you a warm and joyful holiday season and the wish of a much safer and happier New Year!

Your Friends & Neighbors at Members Plus Credit Union

---

**APR = Annual Percentage Rate. Payments for 5.19% APR for 12 months are approximately $85.70 per month per $1,000 borrowed. Terms up to 12 months.**

minimum loan amount $500 and maximum loan amount $5,000. APR is based upon credit score. Rates listed above reflect excellent credit scores. Rates effective October 13, 2020 and subject to change without notice. Offer valid through 01/01/2021. Membership requires a $25 deposit in a share/savings account.

---
“A Christmas Celtic Sojourn” for an interesting year will bring holiday traditions straight into audience’s homes

By SEAN SMITH

Right from the beginning, the idea behind “A Christmas Celtic Sojourn” was to make audiences feel as if they were enjoying the Celtic-flavored celebration of the holiday season in the comfort of their own home — even if they were sitting inside a theater, such as the Shalin Liu in Rockport.

This year, audiences can literally stay at home and see the December 15-20, as if it were in a theatrical setting. Like so many other live events of the past several months, the annual offering of music, dance, and storytelling from Irish, Scottish, and other Celt-ic, and occasionally non-Celtic, traditions has switched to a virtual format for this year. But thanks to a whole lot of planning, creative thinking, and technological prowess, “Christmas Celtic Sojourn” 2020 might well seem to defy time.

WGBH-FM broadcaster Brian O’Donovan, the “Christmas Celtic Sojourn” creator, host, narrator, and occasional performer, will be joined by an ensemble of multi-instrumentalist Seamus Egan and harpist Mairi Ginnest — the show’s music director and assistant music director respectively — that will serve as ambassadors for song and dance segments and takes the lead in instrumental numbers: Jenna Moynihan (fiddle), Owen Marshall (bouzouki, banjo, mandolin), Maura Shawn Scanlin (fiddle, vocals), Conor Hearn (guitar, vocals) and Nuss Huff (drums).

Also part of the proceedings will be special guests contributing to the show’s remotelocations: singers Cathy Jordan, Ellis Kennedy, Mairi Campbell, Siobhan Miller, Hannah Rarity, the quartet Cortese & the Dance Cards, and the “Atlantic Fringe” trio of the band Pumpkin Bread.

For each night of the show, O’Donovan will start off with an introduction that takes one of these partner venues. “It might be something like ‘Well, here we are at the Zeitliner in New Bedford, which has been a beacon of light for so many,’” he explained. “There’ll be local history or local color of some kind mentioned, as if we were indeed right there in that city.”

Why do this? Because these theaters are all sitting dark, and we want to let them know we’re thinking of them. It’s our way of saying, “Here is your Christmas show.”

As always, “Christmas Celtic Sojourn” will have its share of both new and familiar faces among the cast. The ensemble will include a distinct Boston/New England character: Owen Marshall is a member of the Maine-based quartet The Press Gang and has frequently appeared in many Boston-area musical collaborations; Jenna Moynihan, a member of Laura Cortese & the Dance Cards and in a duo with harpist Mari Chaimbeul, has been in Boston for more than a decade; Maura Shawn Scanlin and Conor Hearn, also locals, perform as Irish/Scottish/Americana-in- fluenced Rakish and as part of the band Pumpkin Bread.

For the gig as guest performers, Cathy Jordell will be familiar to many as the lead singer of the popular Irish band Dervish and the “Atlantic Fringe” trio The Unwanted. Others have all been a part of “Christmas Celtic Sojourn” before — notably Aoise O’Donovan, who along with her mother Lindsay brought a true family dynamic to the show. Ellis Kennedy is a former Lowell blunt.com Female Vocal Album of the Year winner; Hannah Rarity made her solo American debut with the show in 2018, the year she won Young Scottish Traditional Musician of the Year honors; Mairi Campbell has earned acclaim as both a singer and musician her rendition of “Auld Lang Syne” was featured in an episode of “Sex and the City”; Siobhan Miller, lead singer in last year’s production, has won the Scots Trad Music “Best Singer” award three times; four-part harmony a cappella group Windborne’s members are veterans of the Boston and New England folk music scene. Cara Butler, who has toured regularly with The Chief-tains and appeared in the show “Dancing on Dangerous Ground,” and Nic Gareiss — known for his unique footwork and joie de vivre — also have been a part of “Christmas Celtic Sojourn.”

O’Donovan can remember very well when he had the first inkling this year’s “Christmas Celtic Sojourn” was going to have to be re-conceived: Appropriately enough, it was after the performance of the St. Patrick’s Day Celtic Sojourn” at the Shalin Liu on March 11 — the only show he and the cast ended up doing.

“It really was ‘the night before the world closed down,’” he recalled. “The situation was getting very concerning, of course, but we were able to get in that one show. And that’s when it began to hit me that this pandemic was going to last a long time. I was hoping I was wrong, but within a week or two it was clear we would have to do something different.”

This prompted a series of conversations between O’Don- ovan and his circle of musicians, staff, and other “Christmas Celtic Sojourn” cohorts on live-performance alternatives. As the ideas began to accumulate, they believed they could put together something that would include all the show’s familiar elements, from songs and dances to O’Donovan’s readings and musings as well as his one-on-one conversations with the artists.

So, earlier this fall, O’Don- ovan and the core ensemble and technical crew “bubbled up” for two weeks in Rock- port — spending the days in the Shalin Liu working on the production and nights at nearby generously donated residences.

“We followed the prot- ocols,” said O’Donovan. “We were tested multiple times, we wore masks and stayed socially distanced as needed. My wife Lindsay would leave food for us on the porch.”

One of the more challenging facets of the production was incor-porating international guests, since they were scattered far and wide: Jordan and Kennedy in Ireland; Campbell, Miller, and Rarity in Scotland; Butler in Canada; Gareiss in Michi- gan; Windborne’s technicians; and Aoise O’Donovan and Jacobsen in New York City. But thanks to the show’s technology, they were able to record their individual parts and send these to the technical crew, who synthesized them up with the ensemble track, creating a seamless final product.

“Again, as much as we would’ve loved to have all these people in person and on stage, doing it this way made for something very special,” said O’Donovan, who lauds the audio and visual technicians for their handi-work. “It was exciting to be singing ‘O Come Ye Emmanu- el’ from a cathedral in Sion, for example. In Ireland, Kennedy will offer a beautiful song in Irish from her family pub in Dingle, and we’ll get all these different settings, atmospheres and moods, which adds so much.”

O’Donovan will be eager as any other to see a live “Christmas Celtic Sojourn,” but the experience of creating a virtual version has been a revelation. “The pandemic has forced us to make decisions we would never make otherwise,” he recalled. “The situation was getting very concerning, of course, some of these were unfortunate — not being able to tour and present the show, of course, some of these were unfortunate — not being able to tour and present the show in our partner venues. But lemonade from lemons: The technology we used gave us great opportunities for collabor- ations, enabling us to bring in people who could never have been able to participate otherwise, and we were able to get in a show we would never be able to create art.”

“We’ve learned how to incorporate the lessons learned this year in future ‘Christmas Celtic Sojourn’ shows — which we hope and trust will be on stage.”

Sean Smith writes for Boston Daily

The “A Christmas Celtic Sojourn” website, christmas- celtic.com, is dedicated to this year’s performers. It also includes the “Christmas Celtic Sojourn” radio show, which invites viewers to become pa- trons for the show; those who do will have access to exclusive show-related video and audio content, and even holiday-re- lated recipes and crafts.
Irish specialty store on tap for the Village

The Adams Corner retail district is now home to an Irish-themed store, Babe Mannion’s Irish Shoppe, which was expected to open for business this week. The store is owned by Bridget Nee-Walsh, who also operates Southie’s Own on West Broadway in South Boston.

Speaking with the Reporter on Tuesday as she was bringing stock into the store, Nee-Walsh said the business would offer products similar to those at Southie’s Own for 36 Dorchester, and also operate Southie’s Shop and the China Sky restaurant.

New store

Two other retailers will soon open in that building, according to property owner John Lydon. They include the Good Coffee shop and Top Shelf Bakery, a coffee and bake shop retailer. Other retail stores already there include the Irish Butcher Shop and the China Sky restaurant.

Second floor

Second floor tenants include the Irish Pastoral Centre and other professional offices.

Freshmade store

A Freshmade Coffee store will be making a return to the village after a three-year hiatus caused by a September 2017 fire that burned out that part of the Adams Street building that also housed Blaas’ Fat Belly Cafe. Freshmade has other locations in South Boston, Braintree, and Roslindale.

Freshmade's new store, located at 786 Adams St., part of the two-story building at the corner of Adams and Gallivan Boulevard. Two other retailers will soon open in that building, according to property owner John Lydon. They include the Good Coffee shop and Top Shelf Bakery, a coffee and bake shop retailer. Other retail stores already there include the Irish Butcher Shop and the China Sky restaurant.

Second floor

Second floor tenants include the Irish Pastoral Centre and other professional offices.

Freshmade store

A Freshmade Coffee store will be making a return to the village after a three-year hiatus caused by a September 2017 fire that burned out that part of the Adams Street building that also housed Blaas’ Fat Belly Cafe. Freshmade has other locations in South Boston, Braintree, and Roslindale.

Freshmade's new store, located at 786 Adams St., part of the two-story building at the corner of Adams and Gallivan Boulevard. Two other retailers will soon open in that building, according to property owner John Lydon. They include the Good Coffee shop and Top Shelf Bakery, a coffee and bake shop retailer. Other retail stores already there include the Irish Butcher Shop and the China Sky restaurant.

Second floor

Second floor tenants include the Irish Pastoral Centre and other professional offices.

Freshmade store

A Freshmade Coffee store will be making a return to the village after a three-year hiatus caused by a September 2017 fire that burned out that part of the Adams Street building that also housed Blaas’ Fat Belly Cafe. Freshmade has other locations in South Boston, Braintree, and Roslindale.
Washington must act on Covid relief

The public health menace of the coronavirus will eventually subside, thanks to the marvels of medical science. But before we can breathe a collective sigh of relief, an economically damaging pandemic may well endure while a fractured Congress — still bickering and posturing over the outcome of a now-concluded presidential election — dithers and dodge.

It has been nine long months since a legislative front in the CARES Act passed the US House — brought some relief to American businesses, homeowners, and renters. The emergency funds afforded by the stimulus package had exhausted, but the emergency itself surges on and can be expected to accelerate in coming weeks. It is uncons- cioulsy that the time has come to agree on a compromise that will break the stalemate before the calendar year ends and a long, deadly, and devastating winter firmly sets in.

Last week, Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker joined four other Republican governors in urging Congress to get a bill passed. “We recognize that there are legitimate differences of opinion on what an ideal package should contain, but these differences pale in comparison to the cost of doing nothing,” they wrote. “There is no more room for partisan positioning and political gamesmanship. Congress and the outgoing administration must make the hard choices now.”

The mounting crisis is particularly urgent here in the Northeast, and in other cold-weather states. Winter temps will take a major chunk of business away from the outdoor patios that have been a lifeline for many businesses since last January. Renewed limits and restrictions will be imposed, imposing tougher restrictions on a wide array of indoor and outdoor gatherings, effective Sun. Dec. 13.

Restaurant limitations
• Diners at restaurants will not be allowed to take their meals outdoors if snow or cold-weather storms fall, and they will need to stay on unless customers are eating or drinking.
• Table sizes will be reduced from 10 guests to 6 guests.
• A 90-minute time limit for meals at tables.
• A ban on musical performances on site.
• People are encouraged to only dine with people in their own household.
• Food court seating will be closed in malls.

Capacity
• Gathering limits at outdoor event venues and spaces will be reduced from 100 people to 50.
• No indoor physical activity venues, driving and flight schools, gyms and health clubs, libraries, museums, retail and office spaces, places of worship, and golf courses will be rest, federally percent capacity from 50 percent capacity.
• All of those indoor venues are limited to 25 percent capacity, or no more than 50 people.
• Those hosting more than 25 people outdoors will be required to notify their local boards of health.

Closing
• Indoor theaters, bars and game venues, and high contact indoor recreation sites.

Gyms, Offices
• Clients will need to wear masks at gyms at all times, even while exercising.
• Workers must wear masks at their workplace at all times when they are in their individual workspaces or alone.
• Encouraged to wear masks to and from the work break rooms.

Editorial
When it comes to funding nonprofits, the specter of racial bias hurls us all

By CHAPLAIN CLEMENTINA CHÉRY

SPECIAL TO THE REPORTER

While the non-profit sector is known for drawing support from across racial and ethnic lines who seek to make the world a better place, numerous studies show that racial bias often creeps into the funding process, resulting in organizations led by people of color receiving far less money than those led by whites.

The nation’s ongoing conversation about race and social justice sparked by the Black Lives Matter movement provides an opportunity for those of us in the non-profit sector to do our own housecleaning. For too long, organizations supporting Black lives have been unable to generate as much funding as their white-led counterparts.

Racial bias - personal and institutional, conscious and unconscious - exists in all aspects of American society, and we are often unaware of racial barriers that keep many others from even considering a donation.

The non-profit sector covers a wide swath of organizations, from arts and culture, to education and health and wellness, to charities, to social service agencies, and environmental organizations. These organizations are struggling to make up that important aspect of American society.

The funding gap between white-led and Black-led organizations is well-documented. One study of more than 140 nonprofits found that white-led groups had an average of $350,000 more than those led by people of color. Groups led by Black women lost more than those run by white women and Black men.

We must continue to talk about how we can better support minority-led and minority-focused nonprofits.

Examination, not zip code, should be key factor in admissions for BPS

By Bill Forry

Renewed limits and restrictions per Gov. Baker’s announcement

On Tuesday, Gov. Baker ordered what could be the first step in a broader reversal of re-opening plans by placing tougher restrictions on a wide array of indoor and outdoor gatherings, effective Sun. Dec. 13.

The News & Values Around the Neighborhood

The Editor:

We woke up this pandemic, it is essential to continue to conversation about what the future of public schooling in Boston will look like. As a graduate of Boston public schools and a life-long resident of Dorchester, I believe the exam school administration process needs change, but I also think that an exam that makes sense for all students is the goal.

I agree with others that the zip-code policy is not the way to go for future exams, but that suggests the option highlights some important disparities. The problem lies with the accessibility of resources that help students succeed on this test, after the testing, and in the rest of their life. My 2019 exam school experience supports the argument that the accessibility of other resources can make all the difference.

I am not saying that kids should not take an exam, but that suggests the option highlights some important disparities. The problem lies with the accessibility of resources that help students succeed on this test, after the testing, and in the rest of their life.

I can guarantee that I got into BLS due to my parents’ ability to pay for tutoring — and pay for cheap money. I had never seen a test like the Independent School Entrance Exam (ISEE) in my whole life, I was not taught how to handle the privilege of accessing outside help to introduce me to the structure of the exam.

Let me be clear: the administration of the Boston Public Schools has been incompetent for a very long time, and not making it accessible for those who can’t afford to make it so.

A 2018 Harvard study found that the exam school’s students’ family income is far more diverse than not. “Black and Hispanic students make up nearly 75 percent of Boston’s student-age population, but represent only 16 percent of enrollment in three schools and only 20 percent of enrollment at the most selective Boston Latin School (BLS).”

We need to get a handle on resources about the ISEE exam, and access to transportation to the exam, the city can work toward a much better system.

The data pointed to a range of systemic biases and other social ills. Realizing the benefit of all the city’s students.

Chaplain Clementina Chéry is the founder, president and CEO of the Louis D. Brown Peace Institute located in Dorchester.

Editor

The Reporter

The News & Values Around the Neighborhood

A publication of Boston Neighborhood News Inc.

Published weekly on Thursday mornings

November 19, 2020

Advertisements: 617-436-1222 x14 E-mail: newseditor@dotnews.com

All contents © Copyright 2020 Boston Neighborhood News, Inc.

Advertise with the Neighborhood News

Visitors to the website: 25,000

Local residents reach via news editor:

800,000+

List of our advertisers:

400,000

Who reads the Neighborhood News?

Our readers are:

700,000

Recognized as the local news source for Boston neighborhoods:

600,000

Why do you want to advertise with us?

Our advertising rates:

500,000

The Neighborhood News can help you:

400,000

The Neighborhood News is:

300,000

The Neighborhood News is:

200,000

The Neighborhood News is:

100,000

The Neighborhood News is:

0

www.dotnews.com

Page 8

December 10, 2020
dotnews.com
Yes, it is safe for seniors at Standish Village

To the Editor:

As a senior living professional, I have been getting a lot of questions lately about whether it is safe to move an elderly relative into supportive communal living in the middle of a pandemic.

My answer is unequivocal: Yes! An assisted living community can offer a safe alternative to living at home alone, isolated, and lonely. Research has shown that prolonged loneliness is more dangerous to a person's health than lack of physical activity, obesity, or smoking 15 cigarettes a day. On the flip side, the wide-ranging benefits for seniors of interactions with people daily, having a social life, and being engaged in meaningful activities have been well documented.

Seniors who have toured our Standish Village community recently were thrilled that we had resumed daily programs and restaurant style dining. They had no idea! Their families were mostly concerned with safety. Here are my answers to their most common questions: re: the pandemic and beyond.

Wells Fargo banking

The Mission: Try again to change the preoccupations on my years-old loan account with Wells Fargo Bank to stipulate online activity only, thereby eliminating paper-by-mail delivery of invoices and other messages.

To-Be:

• Yes, assisted living is a safe, secure, and highly controlled environment. We have strict safety, sanitizing, screening and testing protocols in place to keep residents, staff, and visitors safe. We are prepared for any potential Covid-19 cases.
• Yes, we remain a vibrant community. Everything you need is right here. Friends, support services, gourmet dining, fitness classes, social groups, religious services, fun activities and entertainment, salon services, and your morning cup of coffee are always just a few steps away.
• Yes, we have numerous innovative and meaningful daily events for fitness, recreation, socializing, and entertainment. Many seniors make the move to assisted living for support, companionship, and recreational opportunities that aren’t available to them living at home alone – this year more than ever. It has certainly been a challenge to safely plan some of the events we took for granted before the pandemic, but we are managing it with clever scheduling, appropriate physical distancing, and the enthusiastic assistance of our wonderful residents.
• Creative small group programming allows for safe engagement, and we offer unique and interactive virtual programming.
• Yes, we have resumed restaurant style dining. Enjoying meals with others is an important part of living in a community. In order to maintain physical distance, we have limited capacity in our dining room and offer several seatings at each meal. We continue to follow all state guidelines, cleaning and disinfecting all tables, chairs, and surfaces between seatings.
• Yes, we have systems in place to ensure sufficient, clean air flow. Filters are changed regularly on HVAC systems to maintain air quality, and vacuums have HEPA filters. We also have an ERE makeup air system, which takes fresh air from outside and brings it inside the building to ensure proper air circulation.
• Yes, we continue to adhere to a stringent deep cleaning and disinfection regimen throughout our building and our staff are fully trained in universal infection control practices.
• Yes, we are accepting new residents. We are committed to ensuring a smooth transition into our community with clear move-in guidelines and generous family visiting protocols. We also offer short-term stays for those who might want to move back home when things return to normal after the vaccine is widely available.

My 90-minute encounter with Wells Fargo banking

The Winners-To-Be: The environment less use of paper, postal delivery transportation emissions, etc.; Wells Fargo/less use of paper, envelopes, postal costs; and me (an end to the effort needed to move the unopened invoices to the trash and then to the local transfer station).

The Upshot: It can’t be done, at least not on this day.

Log on time was 9:40 a.m., log off time was 11:10. My own initial search ended with me in a sort of computer screen box canyon; there were no additional links or a “Continue” or “Next” buttons to click on after a certain point. The only way out was to log off and log in again and click on the phone number for Customer Service.

There followed a conversation with a very courteous representative, who seemed eager to help. When she apparently reached the same “box canyon” that confronted me, she asked if I could hold on while she tried to reach other Wells Fargoians, who, it turned out after three more holds, apparently had other things to do than answer their phones.

She apologized, saying she had done what she could at her level. She then asked if I could hold on one more time so she could reach out to experts in the tech sector of the bank’s online operation. I acquiesced.

Marvelous to say, in just a few minutes, a gentleman came on the line and asked the question that is oil on the fire for anyone making such a call who had already given the earlier representative all the details of the matter at hand: How can I help you? After he was filled in, he managed to get me to the same place that I had started at and had no representative No. 1, but this time the system allowed for one more “Continue” click, which prompted a box to appear with the message: “No accounts are currently eligible for changes to delivery preferences.” To flummoxed Representative No. 2, who mentioned that this probably was a matter better dealt with by Wells Fargoians who worked in more rarified positions than he did. Could I hold on one more time? This time I demurred, saying, while there surely must be individuals at the bank who can fix this matter with a single click, some mountains aren’t worth the climb to the next level.

TOM MULVOY

Letters to the Editor
Affordability, jobs are focus of latest Bay City huddle

(Continued from page 1) with the city’s Neighborhood Jobs Trust, using job linkage to train workers to be ready for employment in the future.

Taking noted of his position as the former chairman of the Boston Federal Bank, the organization that commissioned the Color of Wealth in Boston Report, Sykes told attendees that the team intends to use Dorchester Bay City as a platform to combat the racial wealth gap, adding that closing the racial wealth gap “needs to be at the cornerstone of everything we do.”

The Color of Wealth report is commonly cited for revealing the gap with its finding that the average net worth of white families in Boston amounts to $247,500, while the net worth of Black families is just $8.

“We believe that Dorchester Bay City could be the platform for attacking that problem in South Boston and Dorchester through jobs, housing, and economic development,” he said.

The entire project could yield as much as $245 million in lease payments to UMass Boston, which owns the land being developed. Sykes and Galvin estimates the project will account for 25,000 construction and 15,000 permanent jobs, for which, Sykes said, the team “intends to reach out into the neighborhood, train for, recruit, and create contract opportunities and engage folks like everyone on this call.”

They dubbed their economic development strategy “the ramp” of access and inclusion, which they said would start when permitting begins.

“We’re starting now to help people get ready a year and a half away from any construction starting and more than three-and-a-half years before anybody would be occupying the buildings,” said Sykes.

Commercial space makes up about 75 percent of the 18-block site, with the remaining 25 percent allowing for residential buildings with 1,740 units. The team aims to fill the 155,000 square feet of ground floor retail, restaurant, and civic space with local business owners who could provide affordable options.

“We want to open up a discussion about affordable retail,” said Galvin. “We know one of the big challenges—especially today—for any small business or restaurant owner is finding low-cost retail space to attract local vendors and operators.”

He added that the developers will work with the Community Advisory Committee to develop a “game plan … whether it’s lower rent, a lot of TI (tenant improvement) packages, or some combination thereof to get local vendors and restaurateurs into their space from South Boston, Dorchester and other neighboring communities.”

The developers discussed their plans to include broad-based affordability within the new neighborhood by exceeding the number of units required by Boston’s Inclusive Development Policy (IDP), which stipulates that developers of projects with ten or more units support the creation of income-restricted or “affordable” housing.

Under the current formula, Accordia must set aside 226 affordable units at 70 percent Area Median Income (AMI). The developers say they will pledge 261 units at 60 percent AMI. And while the city requires that Accordia pay $82.9 million into funding off-site housing, the team proposes to pay $56.4 million.

Rental limits for affordable units could range anywhere from $455 to $1,125 a month for a studio and $652 to $1,672 for a three-bedroom unit. Accordia also proposes to pay 100 percent of the housing linkage— which amounts to $10 million— when they receive a building permit, instead of paying it over several years after occupancy.

Galvin said they hope “to attack the displacement issues by getting housing built sooner,” roughly 24-26 months before Accordia would be required to pay the off-site money. They intend to work with the Dorchester-based Massachusetts Affordable Housing Association (MAHA) and other organizations to focus those funds on creating homeownership in South Boston and Dorchester.

“We want to turbo-charge (MAHA’s first-time homebuyer program) with this money and use various financing strategies that are currently available to create and preserve more than 500 homes in the area neighborhoods, but, more importantly, to help people buy a first home and start to create wealth,” said Galvin.

During the public comment (Continued next page)

Take the Worry out of Winter

If you are feeling anxious about continued social isolation, winter storms that could keep you inside the house, unpredictable heating bills, or the idea of shoveling your walkway, consider a move to Compass on the Bay or Standish Village.

Residents enjoy the privacy and independence of their own apartment home nestled within a vibrant, supportive and friendly community. We offer each resident a tailored mix of wellness, support and care options to meet needs now and as they change.

The health and safety of residents and staff are always our top priority! During these challenging and uncertain times, we are one of the best place to be:

- Secure & monitored environment
- Strict safety, sanitizing, screening and testing protocols
- Innovative, meaningful daily events, and lots of opportunities for fitness, recreation, socializing and entertainment
- Restaurant style-dining that adheres to physical distancing guidelines
- Weekly housekeeping, an option for personal laundry and NO SHOVELING!

Make the move to Compass on the Bay or Standish Village today! Our lively community can be the perfect cure for the winter blues.

Call or text to schedule a tour!

Compass on the Bay
1380 Columbia Road, Boston MA | 617.286.5450 | CompassOnTheBay.com

Standish Village
1190 Adams Street, Boston MA | 617.289.5656 | StandishVillage.com
A community member goes detail hunting at the meeting

Quite a few of those who engaged in last Wednesday’s informational session had specific concerns. One of them, Markeisha Moore, engaged in a substantive back-and-forth with Accordia developers Richard Galvin and Kirk Dykes on affordability and job accessibility for community residents.

Moore: “I just want to be clear. At 60 percent AMI, a household of one person has to be making $55,000 a year, and that is above what more than half of the people who live in this community make. You haven’t really touched on the makeup of the units, and if you’re building for the people in this community, there would have to be family sizes.”

Galvin: “Part of the conversation going forward as to what is the right mix — typically, they replicate what the overall mix of the market-rate units are, but we aren’t there yet in terms of the number of bedrooms and size.”

Moore: “When do you think you will be there? Are you starting this project for construction and maintenance jobs. We need to be a part of it, and have those long-term tech jobs, and whatever you have to do. I think we have some in our students and the people in this community to be able to attain those jobs and keep them and afford to be in those apartments. Then people will know this is for our community and that you’re not building this for people who are going to come in from outside, out-price us, live there, and then out-price us in the surrounding communities because they have the tech jobs. We can’t compete with those people who will be looking for housing. There’s not going to be enough on that site.”

Sykes: “We very much agree with you and we are committed to putting the jobs in place at all places. We’ve already started doing the outreach for those permanent higher paying jobs to help figure out how to do that training and include local residents.”

(Continued from page 10)
The distinctive blue and cream colors of Dorchester Pottery, which was made in a factory near Clam Point in the first half of the 20th century, is one subject in Celia’s McDonough calendar for 2021. Above, right, the 2021 calendar includes a depiction of an earlier trolley station at Ashmont, circa 1872. McDonough, who is a member of the Dorchester Historical Society, refers to the group’s collection of images and postcards to inform her paintings.

Images courtesy Celia McDonough

(Continued from page 1) Inghouse Hill Unitarian Church, the Englewood Diner, and All Saints Church, as well as a scene depicting “the Remnants of the Seymour Ice Cream Factory” in Port Norfolk. Scattered throughout the calendar are fun facts and markers of important dates in Dot history. A member of the Dorchester Historical Society, McDonough consistently keeps an eye on the past, drawing from old photos or postcards and consulting with society President Earl Taylor for historical accuracy.

“In every calendar I try to incorporate some historical scenes. We have such a wealth of history here going back to the 1600s,” said McDonough. “This year for one of the months I took an old turn of the century black and white postcard of Ashmont Station, blew it up, and added my own colors.”

McDonough will also paint scenes as they are today. “Usually when I paint the calendar, I keep a sketchbook in the car and if I see something I like, I’ll sketch it, then paint it, then finish in the studio,” she said. “I’m retired now, so I just constantly paint, I’d say, four to five times a week. Doing a calendar is a year’s work, but none of it’s for profit. I just love it.”

The calendar is an important fundraiser for Project DEEP. Brendan McDonough estimated the annual sales make up as much as 10 percent of the organization’s yearly budget. “Obviously I’m biased, but it’s great stuff,” he said. “Over 25 years of paintings for which she doesn’t charge us a penny, and that money ends up paying for summer camps for the kids.”

This year, when the pandemic threatened those summer camps and other Project DEEP programming, the organization was forced to switch to remote tutoring and exam prep classes.

“It was a tricky situation where you want to be supporting them as much as possible, but at the same time you have to protect against the health issues that come with one-on-one tutoring, which is basically a non-starter,” he said. “So, we decided to do it remotely and have kids sign up and drop into [virtual] classes, and we had a great turnout.”

While enrollment dropped off slightly due to the Boston exam schools postponing their 2020 test, McDonough said the digital pivot made Project DEEP’s services even more accessible. “It created an opportunity for us to expand and reach out to different groups of kids who were unable to get to the Murphy School on a regular basis. Now one of our kids could be someone on the other side of Dorchester—the remote classes allow anyone to participate. I could see us in the future doing more of that to get to different neighborhoods.”

He is hoping for a vaccine and a return to normal in 2021. As it stands, it’s tough to predict much about next year, but one thing is for certain: Celia McDonough will make another Dorchester calendar, and it will be in demand. “I’ve been getting emails from different states,” said her son in noting the calendar’s widespread appeal. “Just the other day I got one from someone who lives in Montana, but who is originally from the neighborhood. I think it’s special to so many people because it makes them feel like they’re back in Dorchester.”

Celia chalks it up to a cultural phenomenon. The undying love that ‘Offer’s hold in their hearts for the place where they grew up. “It’s all about nostalgia. Dorchester people are unique that way, they are loyal followers…I’ve lived in other parts and I’ve never seen anything quite like the devotion that Dorchester and formerly from Dorchester people have for their home.”

This year’s Project DEEP calendars are currently for sale at Coleen’s Flower Shop, Cedar Grove Gardens, and College Hope. For more information, visit projectdeep.org.
Activists fear safety net won’t catch evictions

By Chris lisinski
State House News Service

New eviction cases for failing to pay rent are on the rise in Massachusetts in the six weeks since a state ban expired, and housing advocates want a stronger response from Beacon Hill given the rise in COVID-19 infection rates and the looming end to a federal moratorium ban.

So far, attempts to remove tenants have taken the shape of a slow-building wave rather than the sudden surge that some feared. Cases were filed in recent weeks at roughly the same rate as before the pandemic, and a federal moratorium will block many evictions from being executed but is due to expire at the end of the year.

But with the pandemic’s second surge in Massachusetts accelerating, community groups and activists are concerned that the state is unnecessarily dangling over the edge of widespread housing insecurity.

“We are right at the beginning of the cliff,” said Lisa Owens, executive director of the City Life/ Vida Urbana group that has urged lawmakers to take additional steps. “This is our last opportunity to act.”

To date, the state trial court system has received 1,882 newly filed residential eviction for failure to pay rent cases since Oct. 17, when the moratorium that had been in place for nearly six months expired. They trickled in slowly at first, with only 70 in the first two weeks, and then rapidly picked up pace.

Over the past two weeks, cases have been filed at roughly the same clip as before the pandemic: 741 in the week of Nov. 16, and 558 in the holiday-shortened week of Nov. 23. On top of those, advocates estimate there are thousands of other eviction cases that had been filed before the state moratorium took effect that could be on the move once again.

Filing an eviction case is in many cases just an early step in the process, and not all filings will result in forceful removal of a tenant. Many cases cannot proceed to the execution stage until 2021 under a separate moratorium the US Centers for Disease Control issued. Lew Finfer, co-director of the Massachusetts Communities Action Network, said that the year-end deadline – combined with the impending expiration of expanded unemployment support Congress created – could prove to be a dangerous turning point.

“It’s a bleak situation getting further and further bleaker and moving into a crisis situation as this all mounts up,” Finfer said.

In April, during the first peak of the COVID-19 outbreak, Gov. Baker signed a bill placing a moratorium on almost all non-emergency evictions and foreclosures. The legislation did not exempt tenants from eventually making good on financial obligations, but aimed to keep as many people as possible safely housed during the public health crisis and at a time when jobs losses were high due to forced business closures.

Baker extended the temporary ban once, but he allowed it to expire on Oct. 17 and instead unveiled a $171 million plan.

The proposal increased the maximum Residental Assistance for Families in Transition (RAFT) benefit available from $4,000 to $10,000 per household, with $100 million available for the program this fiscal year.

More than 5,800 unique households have received RAFT benefits since April, according to an administration spokesperson. Between June 1 and Nov. 30, the state paid out $15.6 million in both RAFT aid and administrative fees to the regional agencies that distribute the funding.

Baker’s alternative to extending the moratorium drew praise from many real estate landlords and landlords, who have argued that they do not want to cause housing insecurity but sometimes need to use court filings to resolve issues with tenants.

Greg Vasil, president and CEO of the Greater Boston Real Estate Board, said allowing the temporary ban to end will help state and industry leaders get a clearer sense of the outlook on the ground.

“When I look at this problem, filing the cases isn’t the problem. What we need to do is make sure people don’t end up on the sidewalk,” Vasil said. “I don’t think anybody wants to be able to do that. I think what they want to do is look at these cases like an onion. We peel back the first layer and we’ve solved a portion of those. Let’s work on the second layer and see, at the end of the day, when we’re finally down to the core of the onion, how many cases are actually left with people with total hardship, and then see what resources we might be able to have to help them out.”

Other organizations and leaders aligned with tenants do not share Vasil’s optimism about the administration’s response.

The RAFT system had a backlog before the new plan, and limits on the expanded funding – such as requiring that tenant can last for six months or until June 2021 for households with school-aged children – make it “a lot harder” to access, according to Andrea Park, an attorney with the Massachusetts Law Reform Institute.

A free mediation program the administration helped launch with the Office of Public Collaboration has been available for landlords and tenants since Nov. 16, according to an administration spokesperson.

Several other components of the plan have yet to make tangible impacts, Park said. The administration said it would help landlords to help more tenants have legal representation during eviction proceedings, but that project is still getting off the ground.

“Not only are those resources not ready now, but we’re right at the beginning of the cliff,” Owens said.

Lew Finfer: “Bleak situation”

There was no way they were going to be ready,” Park said. “They were announced five days before (the moratorium) ended. There were people who, on Monday morning after the moratorium ended on Saturday night, got eviction notices, like ‘you’re going to be out in three days.’”

According to Trial Court data, nearly 98 percent of defendants in rent-related eviction cases in 2020 did not have a lawyer, compared to just 35 percent of plaintiffs.

Park, Owens, and Finfer said they believe landlords should take a more forceful approach, backing legislation co-authored by Housing Committee Co-chair Rep. Kevin Honan that would keep a moratorium in place for a year after the state of emergency’s end and offer funds to small landlords financially impacted by the crisis. That bill (H 5018) has failed to gain traction. In October, Honan said he needed more time and work after it cleared his committee.

CALL THE OLD KIDS ON THE BLOCK.

CALL 617 835-3900. Or visit Hlevenbaum.com

Your car. Your home. Your business. They’re all in the area. Wouldn’t it be nice to work with an insurance company that is, too? We’ve been in Dorchester since 1923. So at this point, we’re not only insurance experts, we’re local experts. Call us to get the policy that’s right (really right) for you.

Call 617 835-3900. Or visit Hlevenbaum.com

WE KNOW LOCAL
H. Levenbaum
How one student juggles work, college — and a pandemic

By Max Larkein
WBUR Reporter

For a few days each week, Josh Knight goes to class on the subway. He's working his way to work at the Charles- town YMCA. But he's also a first-year student in the honors program at Framingham State University, which means that even as he boards an Orange Line car bound for North Station, he might be tuned in, via Zoom, to a seminar discussion of education reform or moral reasoning. His thoughts are often trying to be heard in class over the rattle.

Knight works, he says, to time his comments to the "lulls," like when the train stops moving. "I try to shoot my point to the 'lulls,'" he says. "Like when the train stops moving."

But it's one of his many coping strategies, and a lot of unpredictability.

But you might wonder: Why this year? Why not postpone college and focus on work and home, like thousands of other students did in Massachusetts alone? Why not the MITFA for his participation grade?

For Knight, it comes back to his ring. "The other day, I was feeling a little doubtful about what I could and couldn't do," he says. "And I looked at the ring, and I'm like, this is proof that I'm a hard worker, and I'm willing to do whatever it takes, as long as it takes, to get wherever I wanna go." There are a lot of places Knight wants to go — and he sees college as a "necessary next step" along the way.

He wants to set the standard for the Framingham State Rams basketball team (once play resumes). He wants to build his skills in computer science — following in the footsteps of his father Peter, a longtime engineer. He wants to start a business, launch a podcast, and manage his time better — and more.

So far, he has met the challenges to his share of resistance. At 23, Knight is the heart of a household for a family of five, including his parents, his nephew, and an infant niece. He works full-time as the associate aquatic director at the Charlestown YMCA, monitoring each floor of the complex, checking chlorine levels, supervising lifeguards, and lifeguarding himself. The pandemic struck just as Knight was about to earn his diploma. He wound up on a springtime furlough when the facility was forced to close temporarily. The Constitution Inn — part of the same complex — also closed in March. It had been home to the Knights, cramming the two-bedroom, for years.

At their current apart- ment in Dorchester, his mother Florence explained how the closure drew them to the city's market of short-term rentals, including seven moves during the pandemic. To cover the ex- pensive rates at a series of Airbnb's, the family re- lied on a combination of Josh's pay and — during his furlough —boosted unemployment checks.

It was, sadly, not a new experience. "We've batt- led (homelessness) for more than half my life — literally," Knight says. "Shelters, finding places, sleeping on floors, no floor to sleep on at all, outside, on a beach we've done it all." In September, the family tracked down an apartment at the edge of Franklin Park that Josh's salary could cover, if only barely. It's got enough room to take care of his infant niece and, at the same time, online classes for him and his nephew. Sitting around the living room, the Knights seem relieved.

It has been a pun- ishing decade. As sta- ble housing remained elusive, three of Josh's half-brothers passed away.

The Knights are devout Christians, and their faith tends to brighten even those darkest moments. But clearly, Florence and Peter also believe in their son.

"He's served a lot of loss and displacement, "weird and kept his strength and his focus," Florence says. "To have gone through so much that he has gone through... That tears up. Josh comes over to hug her, but he doesn't say much."

Knight may be un- commonly driven. But his classmates themselves aren't exactly uncommon in higher education today.

"We've done it all," says. "Shelters, finding places, sleeping on floors, no floor to sleep on at all, outside, on a beach we've done it all." In September, the family tracked down an apartment at the edge of Franklin Park that Josh's salary could cover, if only barely. It's got enough room to take care of his infant niece and, at the same time, online classes for him and his nephew. Sitting around the living room, the Knights seem relieved.

It has been a pun- ishing decade. As sta- ble housing remained elusive, three of Josh's half-brothers passed away.

The Knights are devout Christians, and their faith tends to brighten even those darkest moments. But clearly, Florence and Peter also believe in their son.

"He's served a lot of loss and displacement, "weird and kept his strength and his focus," Florence says. "To have gone through so much that he has gone through... That tears up. Josh comes over to hug her, but he doesn't say much."

Knight may be un- commonly driven. But his classmates themselves aren't exactly uncommon in higher education today.
Biden taps Mass General’s Walensky to head up CDC

By Michael P. Norton

President-elect Joe Biden has chosen the head of the infectious diseases division at Massachusetts General Hospital to serve as the next director of the Centers for Disease Control, which will put Rochelle Walensky at the epicenter of the US coronavirus response and vaccination efforts.

Biden’s transition team confirmed to President-elect’s appointment Monday, along with his nominees of California Attorney General Xavier Becerra as health and human services secretary, Dr. Vivek Murthy as surgeon general, and Dr. Marcella Nunez-Smith as chair of the COVID-19 Equity Task Force.

Biden also officially chose Anthony Fauci as his chief medical adviser on COVID-19, and Fauci will continue as National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases director.

Walensky was described as an “influential voice whose pioneering research has helped advance the national and global response to HIV/AIDS” and “one of America’s most respected leaders on the value of testing and treatment of deadly viruses.”

Additional public involvement opportunities are available under 310 CMR 10.100(3O) and 310 CMR 10.140.
ASCEND IS HIRING!

Ascend Mass is hiring for our flagship cannabis store in Downtown Boston. Our workforce will reflect the make-up of the City. We are looking for hard-working people who seek a fast pace and can excel in a highly regulated environment.

Cannabis Associate (FT & PT) $18-22/hr

The Cannabis Associate’s primary responsibility is to facilitate store operations to deliver best-in-class customer experience to our guests. Cannabis Associates support the management team and store by performing day-to-day tasks and procedures while abiding by policies, SOPs and operational guidelines. Cannabis Associates are responsible for guiding customers through their cannabis purchasing experience, making informed recommendations based on customer’s desired outcomes, POS transactions, processing payments, cash handling, order fulfillment, inventory receiving and other aspects of daily operations.

Security Agents - (FT & PT) $22-25/hr

Responsible for compliance with all security SOPs, including interior and perimeter security, camera monitoring, customer engagement, Emergency Response. H.S. diploma required, college degree or comparable life experience strongly preferred. Must have at least 2 years of security experience in high volume retail setting. Must be disciplined and attentive to detail. Interpersonal skills, observation and report writing skills essential.

All applicants must be 21+
Benefits Offered For All Full-Time Positions
Paid Time Off • Health/Dental Insurance
Other Insurances
Advancement Opportunities

TO APPLY PLEASE VISIT
awholdings.com/careers
Caring for you in your neighborhood—it’s what we do best

Dental care at no cost to you

$305 towards eyeglass frames

YMCA membership or $55 per month for gym membership

We speak your language

Join today! Call 1-888-566-3526 (TTY 711)

www.seniorwholehealth.com/SNP

Senior Whole Health complies with applicable Federal civil rights laws and does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, or sex. Senior Whole Health (HMO SNP) and Senior Whole Health NHC (HMO SNP) are Coordinated Care Plans with a Medicare Advantage contract and a contract with the Commonwealth of Massachusetts/EOHHS MassHealth program. Enrollment depends on annual contract renewal. H2224_2019_77906_M Accepted 9/24/2019 *Limitations may apply
NEW CALVARY CEMETERY

Serving the Boston Community since 1899 - Non Sectarian
Reasonable pricing and many options to choose from.

Grave pricing starting at $1,200
Package price from $3,800 (includes grave purchase, first opening & liner for a weekday service, Cremation No Option starting at $1,400) Includes Niche Purchase, First Opening & Liner
617-296-2339
12 Month No Interest on Grave Purchases, Pre Need Opening Arrangements
Lots with multiple graves and oversized graves available.

Package price only available for an "as needed" service.
Overnight Prices apply to Saturday and Holiday Interments.
Other options available at Mt. Benedict Cemetery in West Roxbury

Peddie, Beryl D. (Morrison) of Dorchester. Wife of the late Silford Peddie. Mother of Kenneth Williams, Kenneth Williams and his wife Benita Cecilia Williams and her husband Angel Andrade, and Frankle O’Brien and his wife Miranda of Dorchester.

Pavlakis, Lois J. (Carver), she was the daughter to the late Abraham and Sophie Carver and her stepmother, the late Marcella Carver. Lois leaves behind her husband of 50 years, Paul Pavlakis of Greece and Boynton Beach, Florida, the late Paul H. Quint, and her two daughters, Nancy Scholnick and Stephanie Weinstein. Lois was mother-in-law to David Scholnick and Jason Weinstein as well as cherished grandmother (Meme) to 4. Lois also leaves behind many cousins and fans! Donations can be made in Lois’ memory to Jewish Family and Children’s Services 1410 Main Street, Waltham MA 02451.

Pavlik, Karen, of Hanson, wife of Michael of Hanson, mother of Francine Amentola. Also survived by many nieces and nephews. Donations in memory of Karen may be made to the Jewish Family and Children’s Services 1410 Main Street, Waltham MA 02451.

Quigley, Kathleen, of Cohasset, member of the St. Patrick’s Church. Leaves behind her husband, Brian Quigley, and her son, Michael Quigley.

Quigley, Mary (Ci frino), the last original member of the first super-market in the world, Super Fresh Markets in Dorchester. She was predeceased by her husband Joseph.

Pavelak, Lois J. (Carver), daughter of the late James E. and Virginia E. Byrne, of Hanson, husband Richard of Hyde Park, MA 02136.

Peddie, Beryl D. (Morrison) of Dorchester. Wife of the late Silford Peddie. Mother of Kenneth Williams, Kenneth Williams and his wife Benita Cecilia Williams and her husband Angel Andrade, and Frankle O’Brien and his wife Miranda of Dorchester.

Barbara D. “Tank”, Radio Personality. Paul leaves behind his partner Elaine Reating Peddah of Dover, NH, as well as his children, Robert of North Carolina and sister Joan of Carver and their families.

Paul was born in Cambridge to Paul and Irene and lived throughout Greater Bos ton most of his life. His radio career started in 1977 when he volunteered to answer the “Listener line” at WBZ Radio. Paul rose through the ranks as WBZN van driver, producer, voice of “YOOP,” and sports reporter/director, and then as sports reporter at WZLX until his retire ment in 2003. Donations may be made to the Paul “Tank” Sferruzza Memo rial Scholarship Fund in Box 1204, Marshfield, MA 02050.
Question: What is the value in upgrading three-deckers to fit in a carbon-neutral community? ‘Future Decker’ seeks answers

(Continued from page 1)

We took those results and then engaged in a year-long planning effort to identify and map out our highest priority strategies to bend that curve and get on track to cut out emissions,” Eshel said. An analysis of the city’s most recent inventory report shows that about 29 percent of emissions come from transportation; 20 percent come from buildings; and a small percentage from waste water treatment, and the city’s old natural gas system.

But we broke down the different types of the city’s building stock by their emissions output. “About 50 percent of that is large buildings, big, affordable housing projects and other commercial and institutional buildings. But about 20 percent comes from smaller buildings, including single-family homes up to about six units,” she said.

“We have a lot of those buildings in the city and they comprise approximately a fifth of our emissions.”

The city’s housing stock includes about 14,000 three-deckers, many of which are owner-occupied.

“What’s really neat about them is that 40 percent are owner-occupied. That means there’s a real opportunity because if you own one, you’re more likely to be willing to retrofit for efficiency because you’re also going to benefit from having a better place to live, or better air sealing; it’s going to benefit you, too,” she said.

Many three-deckers operate on oil or gas heat, with large boilers and a lot of storage space. “The city is attempting to transition away from it in favor of other energy sources like heat pumps, solar panels, and air sealing. There’s a great, flat roof-deck on a lot of them, and that’s a great opportunity for solar,” she said.

The city’s current policy efforts to retrofit existing buildings focuses on implementing the action plan released last year, which primarily dealt with large buildings.

“We’re developing mandatory carbon targets for those existing large buildings first. That being said, we know that there are lots of other buildings in Boston and some of our other work is focused on the smaller resources,” she said.

“We want to develop a resource hub so that building owners and residents can connect with a team of folks at the city who could connect them with financing resources and one on one support. We’re also partnering with affordable housing providers to demonstrate different retrofit technologies. It’s one thing to know that new technology is out there; it’s another thing to actually try it out and see how it works in the field.”

Nelson explained that a city and state collaboration to retrofit three-deckers would keep the historic housing stock viable well into the next century in areas of the city where climate resilience is an important issue. The city’s Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) is also developing new design guidelines for climate resilience and Eshel said the city hopes to look at what it would mean to retrofit a three-decker both from an energy and emissions standpoint while also thinking about those that might be in the floodplain.

“The Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) is also developing new design guidelines for climate resilience and Eshel said the city hopes to look at what it would mean to retrofit a three-decker both from an energy and emissions standpoint while also thinking about those that might be in the floodplain.”

Eshel added that the “best city we can’t preserve” the housing via upgrading and not leave them in place as obsolete “carbon burden” or “carbon-relies” of the past. “If we can identify ways to retrofit them sensitively and cost-effectively,” he said, “I think that will be our best shot at preserving this really important housing typology.”

Galen Nelson, chief program officer at Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, said that state-wide emissions are coming from sources similar to that of Boston’s. “It’s important to note that new construction gets a lot of attention – the fancy, new, high performing buildings that are getting built in Boston and in the surrounding communities in the state,” he said. “But existing buildings are really our greatest decarbonization challenge, and 85 percent of the building environment in 2050 will be buildings that are there today. Getting the construction right is important, but we need to work together as a community to tackle existing buildings.”

There would be significant challenges facing the owner of a three-decker who is looking to retrofit for energy efficiency, though.

Eshel added that the “best city we can’t preserve” the housing via upgrading and not leave them in place as obsolete “carbon burden” or “carbon-relies” of the past. “If we can identify ways to retrofit them sensitively and cost-effectively,” he said, “I think that will be our best shot at preserving this really important housing typology.”

According to Nelson, the high efficiency homes of this century start with a focus on building an airtight envelope, with efficient air sealing; electrified heating and cooling systems; induction stoves; and a design that would consider “the transportation side,” making space for charging infrastructure for electric vehicles.

“Unfortunately, we often see the glossy visions of the future, but this is really our reality right now,” he said, noting the city’s many three-deckers and smaller houses while pointing to a slide showing the typical model electric home.

Boston has a high degree of climate confidence in that we know what the cost of those retrofits will be. So by building out these projects we’ll better understand what those paybacks periods look like and that’s what we’re looking at.”

The BSA will host another Future Decker Series event on Wed., Dec. 16, to discuss affordability, financing, and the future of large-scale retrofits.

Nelson explained that the city and state collaboration to retrofit three-deckers would keep the historic housing stock viable well into the next century in areas of the city where climate resilience is an important issue. The city’s Planning and Development Agency (BPDA) is also developing new design guidelines for climate resilience and Eshel said the city hopes to look at what it would mean to retrofit a three-decker both from an energy and emissions standpoint while also thinking about those that might be in the floodplain.

Eshel added that the “best city we can’t preserve” the housing via upgrading and not leave them in place as obsolete “carbon burden” or “carbon-relies” of the past. “If we can identify ways to retrofit them sensitively and cost-effectively,” he said, “I think that will be our best shot at preserving this really important housing typology.”

Galen Nelson, chief program officer at Massachusetts Clean Energy Center, said that state-wide emissions are coming from sources similar to that of Boston’s. “It’s important to note that new construction gets a lot of attention – the fancy, new, high performing buildings that are getting built in Boston and in the surrounding communities in the state,” he said. “But existing buildings are really our greatest decarbonization challenge, and 85 percent of the building environment in 2050 will be buildings that are there today. Getting the construction right is important, but we need to work together as a community to tackle existing buildings.”

There would be significant challenges facing the owner of a three-decker who is looking to retrofit for energy efficiency, though.

Eshel added that the “best city we can’t preserve” the housing via upgrading and not leave them in place as obsolete “carbon burden” or “carbon-relies” of the past. “If we can identify ways to retrofit them sensitively and cost-effectively,” he said, “I think that will be our best shot at preserving this really important housing typology.”

According to Nelson, the high efficiency homes of this century start with a focus on building an airtight envelope, with efficient air sealing; electrified heating and cooling systems; induction stoves; and a design that would consider “the transportation side,” making space for charging infrastructure for electric vehicles.

“Unfortunately, we often see the glossy visions of the future, but this is really our reality right now,” he said, noting the city’s many three-deckers and smaller houses while pointing to a slide showing the typical model electric home.
So come get the relief you deserve at Carney Hospital. Our acclaimed orthopedics staff specializes in high-tech, minimally invasive robotic procedures that will get you back to your active, vibrant self sooner, stronger, and with less pain than you thought possible.

Book an appointment today at carneyorthopedics.com or call 617-506-4930.